

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BANGKO 10768 101048Z

45

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10

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R 100943Z JUN 75

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5404

C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGKOK 10768

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION BANGKOK FROM SONGKHLA ON APR 75. IS REPEATED
FOR YOUR ACTION.

QUOTE

SONGKHLA 060

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINS, TH

SUBJECT: PHO SU'S SURRENDER

REF: SONGKHLA 052

SUMMARY: ALLEGED BANDIT AND MUSLIM SEPARATIST LEADER PHO SU
WAMAEDPSA IS WITHIN A FEW DAYS OF ANNOUNCING WHETHER HE WILL
ACCEPT THE RTG'S OFFER TO SURRENDER. LOCAL RTG OFFICIALS WHOM
I RECENTLY MET SPEAK WITH CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM ABOUT THE SUCCESS OF
THE RTG'S LENIENT POLICY. REGARDLESS OF PHO SU'S DECISION,
MOST LOCAL OFFICIALS VIEW THE RTG'S MOVE AS THE LAST OLIVE
BRANCH TO THE SEPARATISTS. END SUMMARY.

1. YALA GOVERNOR SA-NE WATTANATHON TOLD ME APRIL 24 THAT
PRICHA KOSONPHAN, INSPECTOR, PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE AND
FREQUENT RTG LINK TO PHO SU, WAS IN YALA MEETING THE ALLEGED
BANDIT LEADER. SA-NE THOUGHT THAT PHO SU HIMSELF WOULD SURRENDER
BUT HE CAUTIONED THAT PHO SU HAD LITTLE CONTROL OVER OTHER SEPARATIST
OPERATINGIN YALA AND ADJOINING PROVINCES. SA-NE,
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PAGE 02 BANGKO 10768 101048Z

WHO HAS GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE MUSLIM COMMUNITY, SAID THAT

IF PHO SU DOESN'T SURRENDER, THE RTG WILL TURN TO STRONG SUPPRESSION MEASURES.

2. THE YALA DEPUTY PROVINCIAL SECURITY OFFICER TOLD A CONSULATE ASSISTANT APRIL 24 THAT PHO SU WOULD SURRENDER, PROBABLY ON APRIL 27, HE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT PHO SU WOULD ONLY BRING ABOUT TWENTY PEOPLE WITH HIM, INCLUDING PHO JI UNONG AND CANTON CHIEF WANIT. OTHERS MAY COME OUT LATER BUT THEY WANT TO SEE HOW THE RTG TREATS PHO SU.

3. THE VIEW FROM OTHER PROVINCES, HOWEVER, DOESN'T REFLECT THE SLIGHTEST CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM. THE MILITARY ADVISOR TO NARATHIWAT'S GOVERNOR EXPRESSED TO ME APRIL 24 HIS DISAGREEMENT WITH THE RTG'S CODDLE THE CRIMINAL" POLICIES. HE DIDN'T THINK PHO SU WOULD SURRENDER. EVEN IF PHO SU DID, THE RTG WOULD NOT HAVE MADE HEADWAY AGAINST THE SEPARATISTS, THE MALAYSIAN COMMUNISTS AND THE PERSISTENT BANDITS. SECURITY OFFICIALS IN PATTANI PROVINCE EXPRESSED SIMILAR COMMENTS.

4. COMMENT: THE "BANGKOK POST" CARRIES AN ARTICLE APRIL 25 QUOTING DEPUTY INTERIOR MINISTER BUNLOET LOETPRICHA AS SAYING THAT GANGS OTHER THAN PHO SU'S ARE THINKING OF SURRENDERING TO THE GOVERNMENT. THIS IS A FAR MORE OPTIMIST POINT OF VIEW THAN OFFICIALS IN THE SOUTH ARE WILLING TO TAKE. THE DETAILS OF HOW THE RTG WILL HANDLE PHO SU'S SURRENDER ARE STILL TOO VAGUE. BANGKOK MAY FIND THE SHARP REALITIES OF MINORITY REBELLION PUNCTURING ITS INFLATED OPTIMISM. REUTHER
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